

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 109182
ORIGIN NEA-10

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TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: BTRA, EG, US

SUBJECT: VISIT BY CONTINENTAL TELEPHONE CORPORATION OFFICIAL

1. CHARLES WOHLSTETTER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF CONTINENTAL TELEPHONE CORPORATION, WILL BE IN CAIRO MAY 4-9 IN CONJUNCTION WITH PRESENTATION OF AID-SPONSORED FEASIBILITY STUDY PREPARED BY CONTINENTAL ON CAIRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS NEEDS. WOHLSTETTER HOPES TO CALL ON AMBASSADOR EILTS (CONTINENTAL'S CAIRO REPRESENTATIVE SUPPOSEDLY HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH EMBASSY.)

2. WOHLSTETTER CALLED ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER APRIL 27, ALONG WITH THEODORE BROPHY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF GTE, AND CHARLES BROWN, PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN TELEPHONE. THREE COMPANIES WORKING AS CONSORTIUM IN PUTTING TOGETHER PROPOSAL FOR COMPLETE OVERHAUL OF EGYPTIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM. WOHLSTETTER WILL ASK AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS ON MERIT OF COMPANIES MAKING A JOINT PRESENTATION OF THIS PROPOSAL TO GOE.

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3. DURING CONVERSATION, SOBER EXPRESSED HOPE THAT AN AMERICAN BID WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING CONTRACT WITH GOE. VISITORS CONTENTED THAT THEIR CONSORTIUM WOULD PRESENT ONLY VIABLE U.S. BID (FYI: THIS MAY NOT BE SO, AND IF OTHER U.S. FIRMS BECOME INVOLVED, USG OBVIOUSLY WOULD NOT FAVOR ONE SUCH BIDDER OVER ANOTHER.) DEPT. WILL LEND ALL PROPER

SUPPORT IN KEEPING WITH THAT OBJECTIVE. HE URGED THAT COMPANIES WORK CLOSELY WITH EMBASSIES AND DEPT. AS PROJECT DEVELOPS. SOBER ALSO SUGGESTED THAT VISITORS CONTACT EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR GHORBAL FOR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING FOR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT (A REQUEST FOR SUCH A MEETING ALREADY IS BEING HANDLED THROUGH THOSE CHANNELS). HE CAUTIONED VISITORS THAT USG SUPPORT IN TERMS OF FINANCING WOULD BE LIMITED; FURTHERMORE, THERE MIGHT BE STATUTORY RESERVATIONS GOVERNING ANY USG FINANCIAL SUPPORT(SPECIFICALLY THROUGH AID). FINALLY, SOBER MADE POINT THAT COMPANIES WOULD HAVE TO CARRY BURDEN FOR MAKING FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

4. FYI: WHILE WE HAVE NOT RESEARCHED QUESTION, THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT PROPOSED CONSORTIUM MIGHT PRESENT ANTI-TRUST PROBLEMS. END FYI. VANCE

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